



MEDIA ADVISORY

**NATIONAL WEATHER
SERVICE**

**4 FALCON DRIVE
PEACHTREE CITY, GA 30269**



Contacts: Lans P. Rothfusz
Meteorologist in Charge
770-486-1133 x222
lans.rothfusz@noaa.gov

John Feldt
Hydrologist in Charge
770-486-0028 x322
john.feldt@noaa.gov

**FOR
IMMEDIATE
RELEASE**

Jim Noel
Senior Service Hydrologist
770-486-1133 x228
jim.noel@noaa.gov

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**RECORD DROUGHT WORSENS ACROSS NORTH AND CENTRAL GEORGIA
WITH LITTLE IMPROVEMENT EXPECTED**

Drought conditions have worsened across north and central Georgia due to a very dry August, putting the area on pace for a record four-year drought. "Much of the area is now under severe to extreme drought conditions," said Jim Noel, Senior Service Hydrologist with the National Weather Service in Peachtree City, "and we are forecasting little improvement in the situation for the next several weeks. We have not seen such prolonged dry conditions in more than 100 years."

The dry August compounded an already serious situation for the state. By the end of July 2002, Georgia experienced its driest 12-month period ever recorded. Then in August, Atlanta experienced its 3rd driest August on record while Athens had its 2nd driest and Columbus its 10th driest.

If above normal rainfall does not occur in north and central Georgia in the next few months, the period 1999-2002 will become the driest four-year period since official records began in 1878. For example, the total rainfall in Atlanta from January 1, 1999 to September 5, 2002 has been 137.7 inches. (The four-year normal amount for Atlanta is 200.76 inches.) Atlanta's driest four-year period on record occurred from 1893-1896 when 157.39 inches were received. Unless an additional 20 inches of precipitation falls by the end of the year, 1999-2002 will become Atlanta's driest four-year period on record. Most of the state is in a similar situation.

(more)

“Many Georgia rivers are either close to, or setting, new daily record low levels,” according to John Feldt, Hydrologist in Charge, of the NWS Southeast River Forecast Center, “Furthermore, our 60-day outlook calls for little significant relief with continued extremely low river and lake levels over most of the state.” Larger lakes are also running well below normal. Lake Lanier, a major water supply source for metro Atlanta, is at 1061.5 feet or 9.5 feet below normal levels. This is about the same as a year ago.

The outlook for the next two weeks calls for continued below normal rainfall and near normal temperatures. In addition, the state is entering autumn, normally its driest period of the year.

The National Weather Service (NWS) Weather Forecast Office in Peachtree City, GA continues to issue Hydrologic Outlooks on the status of the drought across north and central Georgia under WMO header FGUS72 KFFC . Additional information can be gained at our website www.srh.noaa.gov/ffc.

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